

**Statement of Rep. Markey**  
**General Debate on Iraq Supplemental**  
**10-16-03**

I rise in opposition to this bill.

Last fall we were told that Congress needed to authorize military force against Iraq in order to convince the UN to send the inspectors back into Iraq.

But as soon as we did so, the Bush Administration pulled the rug out from under the UN inspectors and decided it would use the authority Congress granted them to fight a unilateral war.

Now, we are learning that there were no weapons of mass destruction in Iraq. Congress and the American people were deceived, misled and manipulated with false and misleading intelligence and political spin from the Bush White House.

Now, the Bush Administration can't find any weapons of mass destruction.

It can't find Saddam Hussein.

It can't find Osama bin Laden.

It can find Taliban leader Mullah Omar.

It can't even find out who within the White House staff leaked the name of that covert CIA operative.

And what does the Bush Administration now ask the Congress for? They ask us to trust them and grant their request for another \$87 billion into Iraq with no clear vision of how we are going to extricate ourselves from this morass.

Our troops fought magnificently in Iraq, and they deserve our continuing support. But is the best way to support them to blindly give the Bush Administration a blank check \$87 billion appropriation to continue its misguided and reckless policies in the region? I don't think so.

I hear a lot of talk about from the Administration and its supporters about how we are crafting with this legislation a new "Marshall Plan" for Iraq.

Let me tell you, when George Marshall was crafting a plan for President Harry Truman to reconstruct Europe after the devastation of World War II, he wasn't setting up sweetheart no-bid contracts for companies associated with the corrupt old Pendergast Machine in Kansas City.

That's what we're seeing today with the contracts being given to Halliburton and other favored companies. We are providing broad transfer and reallocation authority to the Executive Branch that gives the Bush Administration virtually unfettered discretion to spend the monies we appropriate in any way they wish.

And at the same time that the President asks us to spend \$87 billion in Iraq, he is also going around the country giving speeches calling for making the tax cuts for the top one percent wealthiest in America permanent!

So, if you are wealthy in this country, you get tax cuts and fat government contracts.

But if you are an ordinary working American, you get your Social Security and Medicare trust funds raided to pay for the reconstruction of Iraq. And meanwhile, the Republicans are busy at work coming up with new schemes to increase your Medicare co-pays and means-test your benefits.

This is wrong, it is just plain wrong.

I intend to vote against this bill today. It is a blank check. It gives the President and Secretary Rumsfeld too much authority. And it fails to do what is needed to build international support for peacekeeping and reconstruction in Iraq or craft an appropriate exit strategy to get our troops back home.

I urge defeat of the bill.